

rushing out of the windows overlooking the River, through the ground floor the outbreak was confined on the Bonham Street side to Mr. Valtriv's premises. An hour or more after the fire first started the roof fell in with a crash over Mr. Valtriv's and Messrs. Hoagland and Co's godowns. Shortly after this the fire was got under. Mr. Gregory Moore, whose office fronts Boat Quay, had his stock of hides partly destroyed and water-damaged, and amongst others Mr. David and Mr. Boyd had their offices destroyed, the former estimating his damages at not less than \$3,000, not covered by insurance. Roughly speaking the damage done, adding \$25,000 for the buildings themselves, but not including the loss incurred by Messrs. Katz Brothers, amounts to over \$285,000. Messrs. Hoagland & Co., by far the heaviest sufferers, were, however, fully insured, having lines with various companies, Java, home and the local company, to the amount of \$221,000. It is not expected that there will be much in the way of a large sum from either Hoagland & Co's or from Mr. Valtriv's godowns, both of which were completely gutted.

The damage to Messrs. Katz Brothers' godown, though serious, will not be very heavy, but it is yet impossible to estimate it. It is, however, fully covered, the firm being insured for a sum of \$100,000 as follows:—

Straits Insurance Co. Co., \$35,000 Transatlantic Insurance Co. (P. & T. Co.), \$5,000 Queen's Insurance Co. (Hongkong), \$40,000 Prussian National Insurance Co. (P. & T. Co.), \$30,000. The full list of insurances will show how the accident losses are distributed amongst the various local and home companies:—

MESSRS. HOAGLAND & CO.
Queen Insurance Co. (Hongkong), \$40,000
Royal Fire and Life (Hongkong), \$30,000
Netherland Fire and Life (Hongkong), \$10,000
Samarang Sea and Fire (Hongkong), \$30,000
Alliance Assurance Co. (P. & T. Co.), \$10,000
South Sea Fire and Marine (M. Kerrow), \$10,000
Sun Fire (Brinkman), \$10,000
Hamilton Insurance Co. (M. Kerrow), \$10,000
Straits Fire Insurance Co., \$10,000
Oceania Insurance (Kauai), \$10,000

MR. VALTRIV.
Alliance Assurance Co. (P. & T. Co.), \$20,000
Guardian Fire and Life (P. & T. Co.), \$10,000

MR. G. G. MOSES.
Straits Insurance Co., \$5,000
(Water-damaged chiefly.)

The origin of the fire is at present involved in mystery. No suspicion is entertained by the Police of incendiarism, and in the absence of any definite information as to the precise scene of the outbreak no opinion can be hazarded on the probable cause of the conflagration.

FALSHOODS OF HISTORY.

FIFTY-TWO LIES ARE HERE EFFECTIVELY NAILED.

The alleged African king, Prester John, never had a existence.

The never was such a person as Pope Joan, the so-called female pontiff.

William Tell did not find the Swiss Confederation, and the story of Gessler has no historic basis.

There is no historic authority for the statement that a little George Washington cut down a cherry tree.

Charlemagne's Paladins had no existence, and the history of Charlemagne himself is clouded by myth as to be utterly unreliable.

William Tell did not exist, and the story of his death is a mere invention.

The mother of Constantine did not interfere with her son to spare Rome. The story has no better foundation than that about Horatius holding the bridge.

There is no reason to believe that Tarquin insulted Lucretia. His power was overthrown in a popular revolt, which is the only basis for the story.

Perceval did not save the life of John Smith. It has been ascertained that this worthy man was the most abject and depraved of his century. He was the pioneer of American liars.

The story of King Arthur and his round table is a myth, although what purports to be the round table is still to be seen in a south of England town.

Alfred the Great did not win the Danish camp disguised as a minstrel. There is good reason to believe that he would either play the harp or speak Danish.

The maelstrom is not a whirlpool which sucks ships down into the depths of the ocean. It is an eddy, which in fact we either can cross in safety by any vessel.

Queen Eleanor did not suck the poison from her husband's wounds, as she did not accompany him on the expedition during which the incident is alleged to have taken place.

Cromwell and Hampden did not attempt to sail to America at the outbreak of the English revolution. A number of their friends did, but they had no thought of doing.

The "Man in the Iron Mask" did not wear a mask of iron. It was black velvet, secured by steel springs.

The wonderful Damascus blades that cut bars of iron in two were not so superior to most good blades made to-day.

Socrates was not a half-Greek philosopher, but a genuine Greek teacher and teacher, who died worth over \$5,000.

Cæsar did not say "Et tu, Brute?" Eye-witnesses to the assassination are deposited that he died fighting, but silent, like a wolf.

Richard III. was not a hunchback, but a soldier of fine form, some six feet high, good looking, and great personal strength and courage.

Augustus was not the public benefactor he is represented to be. He was the most exacting tax collector the Roman world had up to his time ever seen.

Machiavelli never put his head in the fire. The story was a fabrication of a Roman historian hundreds of years after the supposed incident.

Blonde! the harper, did not discover the prison of king Richard. Richard paid him ransom, and the receipt for it is among his Austrian archives.

Horatius never defended the bridge. The story was manufactured by the same gifted author who gave the world the account of Scævola's heroism.

Gen. Cambrone did not say, "The guard dies, but does not surrender." The words were the invention of a Parisian journalist, and attributed to him.

Cæsar did not cross the Rubicon. It lay on the opposite side of the Italian peninsula to the point where he left his possessions and entered Italy.

The Bridge of Sighs at Venice has no romantic worth the name. Most of the unfortunate who cross it are petty thieves who are sent to the workhouse.

Fair Rosamund was not poisoned by Queen Eleanor, but after a long and happy life in the convent of Godstow, died, greatly esteemed by her associates.

Diogenes never lived in a tub. The story that he did so has no historic origin, and is a pure invention.

The story of the discovery of the New World by Christopher Columbus is a pure invention.

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comment by a biographer that "a man so crabbled ought to have lived in a tub like a dog." William Rufus was not accidentally shot by an arrow from the bow of Walter Tyrrell. He was assassinated. His body, when found, bore the marks of three or four sword thrusts.

There was probably no such man as Romulus. The first historian who mentions him lived at a distance of time so great as to throw extreme discredit on the story as told by him.

Alexander the Great did not weep for other worlds to conquer. There is reason to suspect that his army met with a serious reverse in India, a fact that induced him to retrace his steps.

The immense burning glasses with which Archimedes burned the ships of the besiegers of Syracuse at 10 miles' distance were never manufactured, and it is now known that they could not have existed.

Vinegar will not split rocks to Hannibal could not thus have made his way through the Alps. Nor will it dissolve pearls, so that the story of Cleopatra drinking pearls melted in vinegar must have been a fiction.

"Madcap Harry" was not sent to prison by Sir William Gascogne, the stern judge, nor was the latter respited by the judge when he became king, and the story did not appear for 150 years after that time.

The existence of the Colossus of Rhodes is considered by some historians extremely doubtful. There is no evidence that the ancients were able to cast pieces of metal of such size as must have entered into its composition.

The blood of Rizin, Mary Stuart's favorite, can not be seen on the floor where she was murdered by Darnley and the other conspirators. What is seen there is a dash of red paint, annually renewed for the benefit of gaping tourists.

The pass of Thermopylae was defended, not by 300, but at least 7000 Greeks, or, according to some writers, 12,000. The 300 were the Spartan contingent, who showed no more bravery on that occasion than their companions in arms from other Greek states.

Mary Stuart of Scotland was not a beauty. She had cross-eyes, and, to save the trouble of having her hair dressed, cut it off close to her head and wore a wig. When, after her death, the executioners lifted her head to show it to the people, the wig came off and displayed a close-cropped skull covered with gray hair.

Queen Elizabeth was not the angelic creature represented in the histories and poems of her own time. Her hair was red, her temper red-hot. She sometimes drank too much, and at any provocation would carry on like a trooper. She frequently quarrelled with her maid, and sometimes struck and kicked her.

There was no monster. His mother, Agrippina, was not put to death by his order, nor did he play upon his harp and sing "The Burning of Troy" while Rome was on fire. Our knowledge of him is gained from Tacitus, who hated him, and from Paterius Abiter, who was put to death for conspiring against him.

Hannibal did not send three bushels of gold rings, plucked from the hands of Roman knights killed on the field of Cannae, back to Carthage as evidence of his victory. The messenger who carried the news back to the Carthaginian senate, on concluding his report, "opened his robe and threw out a number of gold rings gathered on the field."

Pitt did not use the expression "The atrocious crime of being a young man." The words were used by Dr. Johnson, who was not present, but wrote a report of the speech from an abstract given him by a hearer.

Woeislers are not crushed by hundreds under the wheels of the car of Juggernaut. The car has not been taken out of the temple for many years, and such deaths as formerly occurred were exceptional or accidental.

Columbus did not make an egg stand on end to confute his opponents. The feat was performed by Brunelleschi, the architect, to silence critics who asked him how he was going to criticise the dome of the cathedral of Florence.

Constantine the Great was not a saint. He Constantine the Great was a man of blood and a murdered his wife, one of his sons, and a murdered his wife, one of his sons, and a murdered his wife, one of his sons.

Philip III of Spain was not roasted to death by a roaring fire because he refused to forsake any one to come to his assistance. He died a natural death, and the same story is told of a dozen different monarchs who were sticklers for ceremony.

The hanging gardens of Babylon did not hang, nor were they gardens. They were terraces supported by arches, and were grown with vegetables. They were erected for the amusement of a Babylonian queen who had come from a mountainous country.

Charles IX did not fire on the fleeing Huguenots from the window of the Louvre during the massacre of St. Bartholomew. On the contrary, he was frightened almost to death by the reports of the guns, and spent the time in weeping and wringing his hands.

The siege of Troy was mostly a myth. According to Homer's own figures (if there ever was such a man as Homer) Helen must have been at least 60 years of age when the first met Paris, and even in the heroic period of the world women of that age were a trifling rarity.

Louis XVI did not behave with overwhelming dignity at his execution. On the contrary, he screamed for help, struggled with the executioners and begged for mercy. Nor did the attendant priest say, "Son of St. Louis, ascend to heaven." The expression was used for him by a Parisian priest.

Sappho, the poetess, was not a wanton beauty, nor did she throw herself from the Leucadian cliff to be cured of an unworthy love. The latest investigations prove her a respectable married woman with a large family, whom she raised with as much care as a Greek matron usually gave her children.

The army of Xerxes has always been greatly overestimated by historians. Commonly computed at 3,000,000, the best evidence goes to show that, camp followers and all, it did not exceed one, the increase being due to the natural inventiveness of the oriental imagination and to the vanity of the Greeks, who prided themselves on having defeated its vast numbers.

"Thousands of ships," numbered only 1200 to begin with, and of these 400 were lost in a storm, so that he reached the coast of Greece with about 800.—*Parson's Weekly.*

IN FASHION'S FAVOUR.

THE SAPPHIRE HAS BEEN TAKEN UP.

Sapphires have of late years become fashionable gems. The blue of the sapphire is very seldom pure or unadorned, and the whole substance of the stone is mixed with black, or, at least, with a bluish-grey, which gives it an iridescent appearance; sometimes with red, which almost imperceptibly by daylight, yet by artificial light gives it an amethystine appearance.

Two sapphires which by daylight may appear of the same hue often differ extremely in color at night. If the stone be held in an ordinary pale of forceps at inch distance, the surface of very clear water the parts of the stone colored and colored will be distinctly apparent. This remark applies to all other gems.

Star sapphires are usually of a grayish blue color, and the star is exhibited in its greatest perfection when looked at by the light of the sun or a candle.

The sapphire is found of all tints and shades of blue, but the color which approximates to the shade formerly called *bleu du roi* is the most valuable. A really fine sapphire should appear blue by artificial light as well as by day. This stone is found in crystals, generally of much larger size than the ruby. The name "sapphire" is perhaps the only one which runs through all languages with very slight alteration—the Hebrew name sapphir, the Chaldean sappirion, the Greek sappheiros, Spanish Zafiro, the Latin sapphirus, etc.

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Ceylon has always been famous for its sapphires as well as for other gems, and even the energetic rapacity of the old Roman adventurers failed to exhaust its riches. Of all the brilliant gems extracted from the soil of this richly endowed island, hardly any was more highly esteemed by them than the sapphire. Its exquisite tint recalled to the exiled Roman the clear, cloudless azure of the heavens or the seven-hilled city. The treasures and regalia of Europe possess sapphires of very large size. In the green vaults of Dresden are several of remarkable size and beauty. In the Russian Treasury are some of an enormous size, among them one of a light blue tint. The engraving of sapphires was hardly known before the days of the Roman empire, and probably the most celebrated of all engraved sapphires is the great signet of the Emperor Constantine, which weighs fifty-three carats.

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Ceylon has always been famous for its sapphires as well as for other gems, and even the energetic rapacity of the old Roman adventurers failed to exhaust its riches. Of all the brilliant gems extracted from the soil of this richly endowed island, hardly any was more highly esteemed by them than the sapphire. Its exquisite tint recalled to the exiled Roman the clear, cloudless azure of the heavens or the seven-hilled city. The treasures and regalia of Europe possess sapphires of very large size. In the green vaults of Dresden are several of remarkable size and beauty. In the Russian Treasury are some of an enormous size, among them one of a light blue tint. The engraving of sapphires was hardly known before the days of the Roman empire, and probably the most celebrated of all engraved sapphires is the great signet of the Emperor Constantine, which weighs fifty-three carats.

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